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SLAIN!!!

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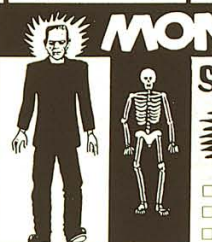
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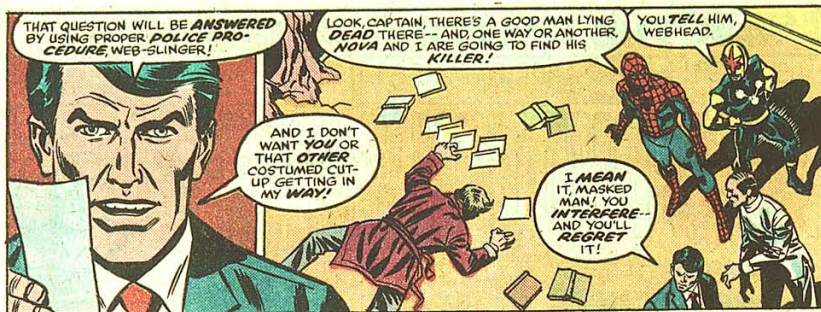
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THE QUESTION STILL REMAINS... WHODUNIT??

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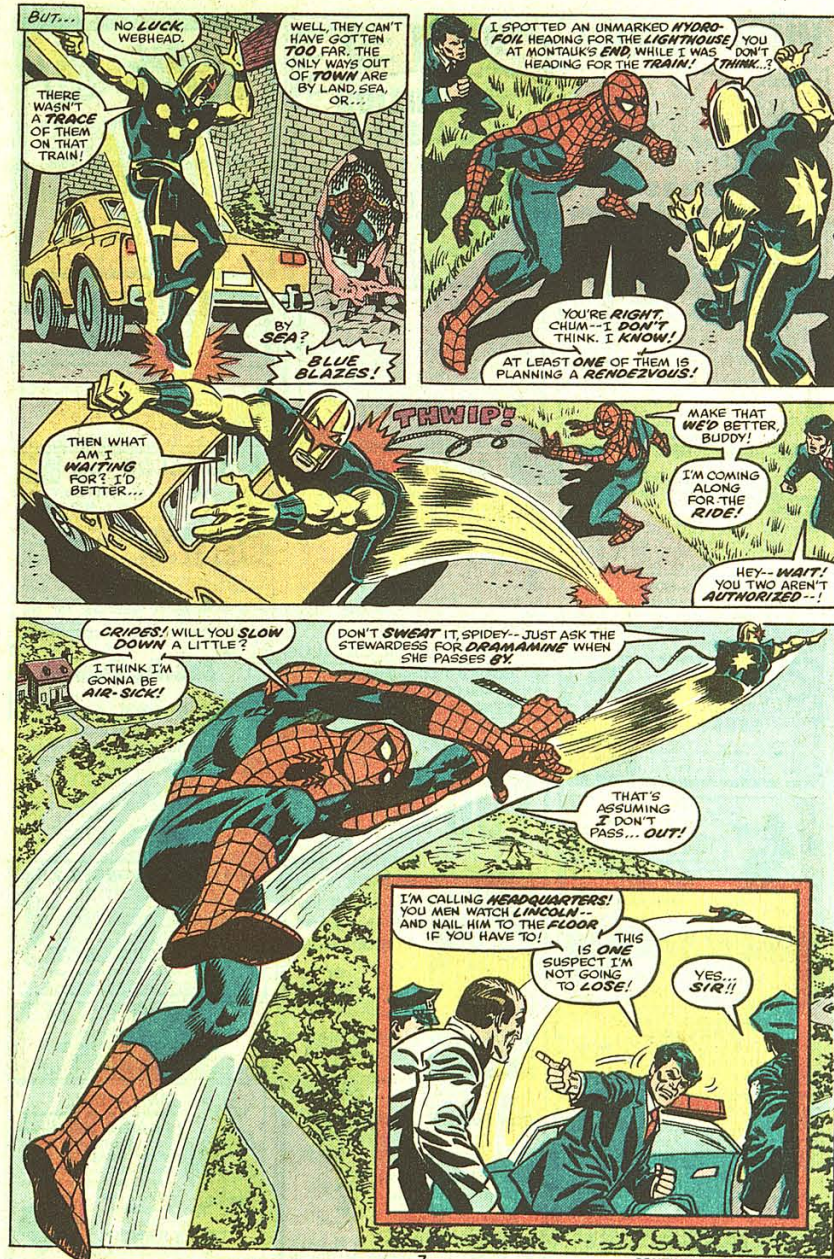
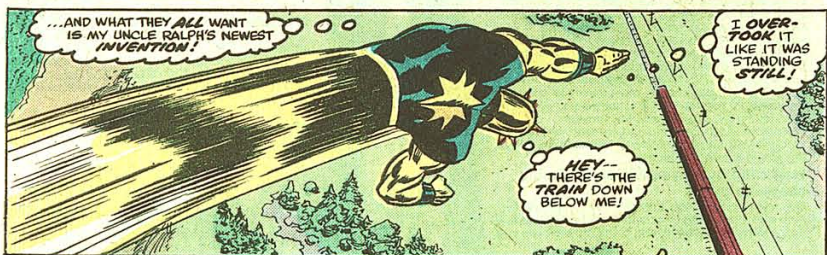
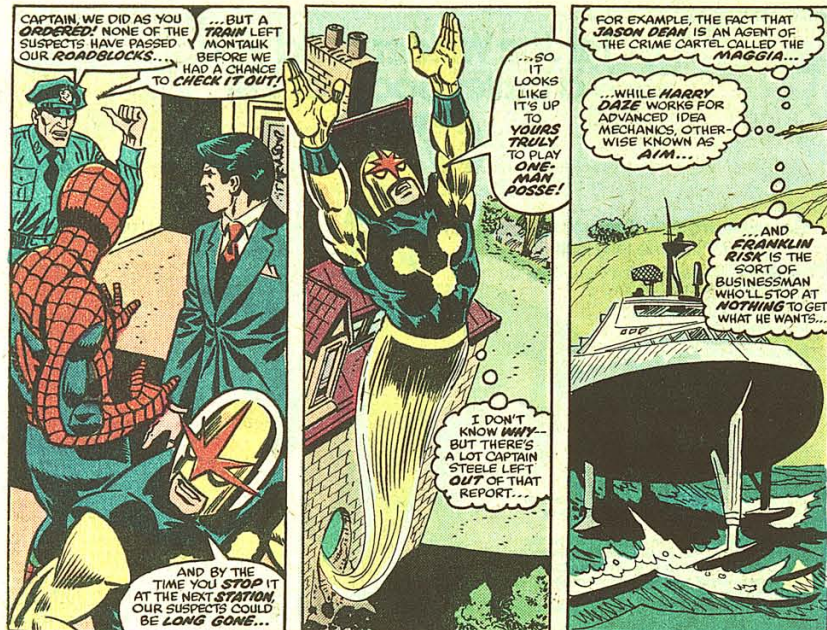
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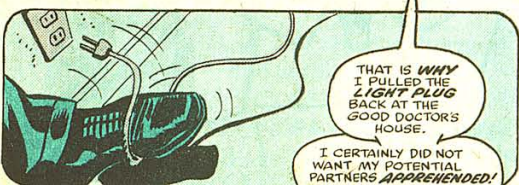
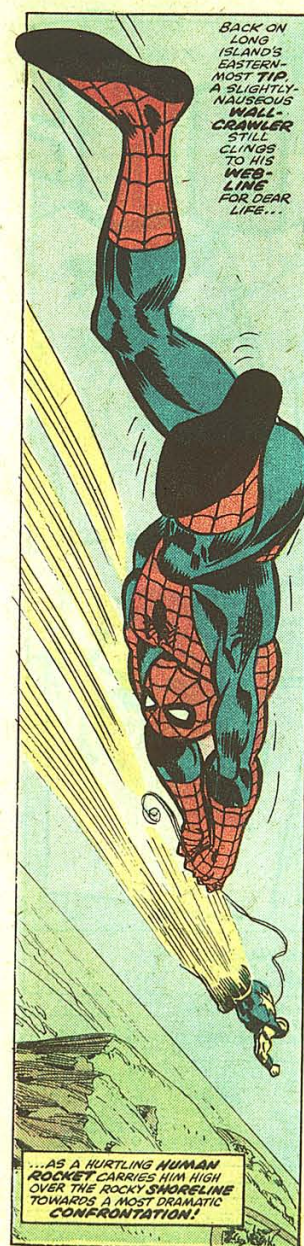
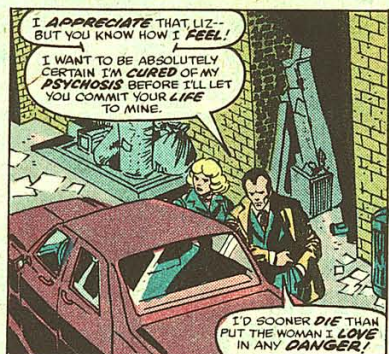
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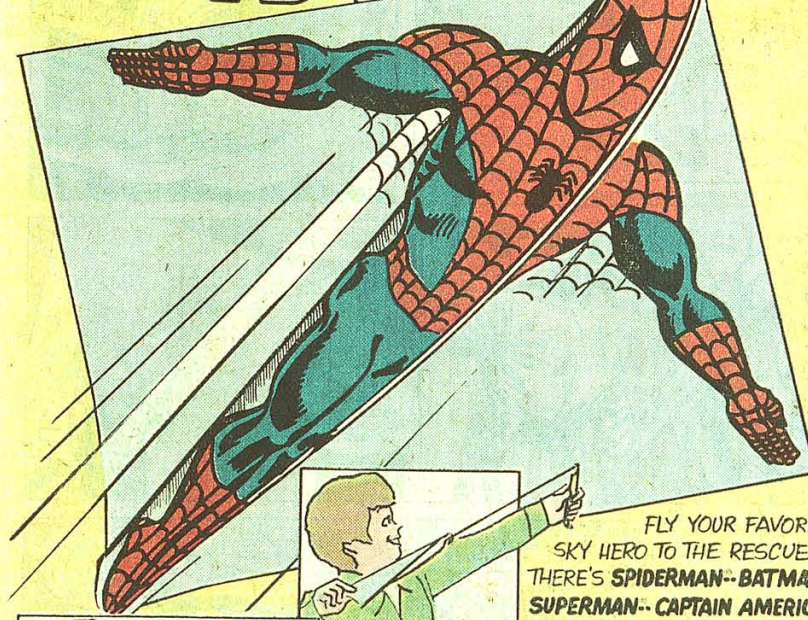
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14



15



THAT SHOT WOULD'VE FINISHED ANYBODY WHO DIDN'T HAVE **NOVA-STRONG SKIN**, WHAT-EVER THAT IS--

--BUT IT STILL MANAGED TO KNOCK ME ALMOST SENSELESS--

...AND IT LOOKS LIKE THIS GANG OF GOONS IS PLANNING TO MAKE IT A MORE PERMANENT CONDITION!



EH? THE WEB-SLINGER HE BROKE MY GRIP--?!

I HATE TO HAVE TO TELL YOU THIS, CHUCKLES--



--BUT YOU'VE BEEN LOSING YOUR GRIP ON THINGS FOR A LONG, LONG TIME NOW--

--LIKE SINCE YOU FIRST PUT THAT UGLY WIRE-MESH TRASH CAN ON YOUR POINTED LITTLE HEAD!



FOOL! OUR COMA-GUNS WILL DEAL WITH--

AARRGGHH!!

NO! SPIDER-MAN DUCKED. I SHOT MY OWN COMRADE!

ZAK!

AND FRANKLY, FELLA--IT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED TO A MORE DESERVING GUY!

WHILE--



WILL YOU CREEPS GET OFF MY BACK?!

I'VE GOT A KILLER TO FIND HERE!



AND THOUGH I HATE TO MENTION IT, JET-HEAD--

BROK

--IT LOOKS LIKE OUR THREE STERLING SUSPECTS HAVE FLOWN THE COOP AGAIN!



LOOK, LET ME DO THE MOPPING UP HERE KID! YOU JUST GET GOING!

BUT YOU WON'T GO VERY FAR!



BUT THEY COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR, SPIEY, AND AS SOON AS I FINISH WITH THIS GOON SQUAD--

--I'LL USE MY NOVA-SPEED TO TRACK 'EM DOWN!



NOVA? HEY, WHAT'S WRONG, BUDDY? WHAT HAPPENED TO...?

UH-OH, I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!



YOUR OVER-ENTHUSIASTIC PARTNER IS UNCONSCIOUS, WALL-CRAWLER, AND PHOTON WILL SOON SEND YOU TO JOIN HIM--



FAT CHANCE, SUNBEAM!

YOU COULDN'T FIND THE ROAD TO ZANZIBAR WITHOUT BOB HOPE OR BING CROSBY TO HELP YOU!

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THE SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Marvel,

You've really got to hand it to Jonah—he's persistent! But I don't think our hero has anything to worry about. Those silly Spider-Slayer things have never worked effectively before; and JJJ's just too zealous about his whole "crusade" to ever succeed.

What interests me is this strange, new entity which calls itself the Will-O'-The-Wisp. An unusual villain, to say the very least! And it's not just his powers—he's a tragic figure, forced to perform acts repellent to him, and hoping to regain his lost humanity. He seems to be one of Spidey's more fascinating foes, even from what little we've seen of him. And I hope we see much, much more.

And last, but certainly not least, there's Aunt May. That sweet, dear old lady we all know and love. We're slowly discovering, as is her devoted nephew, that she isn't the innocent, delicate little flower we had all thought. Peter should tell her his secret. And who knows? She may knit him some long underwear to wear under his working clothes in the wintertime.

M.E. Robbins
230 Venado Avenue
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

You're not alone in your desire to see more of ol' Wispy, friend Robbins. Initial response to his (its?) premiere appearance has been highly favorable, and we're looking forward to having him back soon, too!

Dear Marvel People,

Well, you guys goofed again! In issue #167 of SPIDER-MAN, page 17, panels 1-6, you feature Joe Robertson. But a couple of panels later, Spidey calls Joe "Robbie". Maybe this has been asked before, but I'll ask it again: What the heck is Robertson's first name?

Make mine Marvel.

Mike Nelson
2421 East 71st Street
Brooklyn, NY 11234

The answer is simple, Mike, Robertson's first name is Joe.

But his nickname is Robbie!

When people work for an organization as big as the Daily Bugle—where there are likely to be many men with a common first name—nicknames just naturally evolve. And J.R. has been called Robbie for more issues than we care to remember. All clear?

Dear Spider-folks,

This is a letter of protest!

In the letters page of NOVA #7, a letter from John Damico was printed, saying that Nova surpasses Spider-Man! Now, don't

get me wrong, Nova-lovers, Nova is right up there beside Spider-Man, but there's just no way he can surpass Spidey! I really don't know what John was talking about. Surely you realize that nobody can surpass the Wall-crawler in just seven short months. Oh, he's right in saying that Nova is great—that's a fact. I just want it made known that Spidey is still the best!

Matt Pierce
703 NW 19th Street
Gainesville, FL 32603

You won't get any argument from us on that point, Matt. Not when May Parker's favorite nephew is going strong in five monthly mags and his own newspaper strip!

And by the same count, we have to agree with you that Nova is something else, too! In fact, we think that this current NOVA/SPIDER-MAN crossover is one of the wildest teamings to hit the stands in some time.

Dear Len, Ross, and Mike:

I really like what you've been doing in SPIDER-MAN, especially all the subplots. Just look at issue #167, with Aunt May's new interest in old people's rights, and the intro of Dr. Hamilton and Flash's resultant interest in him. You really keep things moving, and that's good.

As for the villains of the piece, Will-O'-The-Wisp is probably one of the most original and fascinating villains we'll see this year. Who designed his appearance, Andru or Romita?

Now as for the other villain...well, you can't win them all! The Spider-Slayer is tired, even if he does have JJJ's face. By the way, since when can people get away with attempting to murder super-heroes? Jonah may be a big publisher, but there's no way he could get away with it.

James L. Bleeker
1125 Courtney, NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

We really don't think Jonah would have tried doing Spidey in, Jim. It would have been more to his liking, probably, to knock the Web-slinger out, unmask him, and then parade him through the streets to the nearest police station. Fortunately, that didn't happen.

As to the design for Will-O'-The-Wisp, you can credit that to the collaborative efforts of Mr. Romita and Lively Len himself. Ya see, Wispy first saw the light of day in one of the many fanzines Len was connected with nearly 12 years ago! And after much urging on the part of Marv Wolfman and old buddy Mark Hannerfeld, Len finally decided to introduce Wispy to the big-time as a SPIDER-MAN foe. The only thing was that the early Will-O bore all too close a resemblance to a misty Silver Surfer for the Lively One's tastes, so he sat down with Johnny and—ta-dah!—Will-O'-The Wisp/Marvel style was born!

(Gee, aren't these behind-the-scenes stories fascinating?)



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A-77

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ONCE AGAIN, SPIDER-MAN, YOUR MOCKING HUMOR SERVES ONLY TO MASK YOUR OWN INSECURITY...

--BUT PHOTON IS NOT FOOLED!

THERE IS NO JOKE, NO JEST, NO JIBER THAT CAN DISTRACT ME FROM MY TASK--



--OR TURN ASIDE THE LIVING-LIGHT POWER OF MY PHOTON GUN!!

DUMMM! N-NOW I KNOW HOW NOVA FELT!

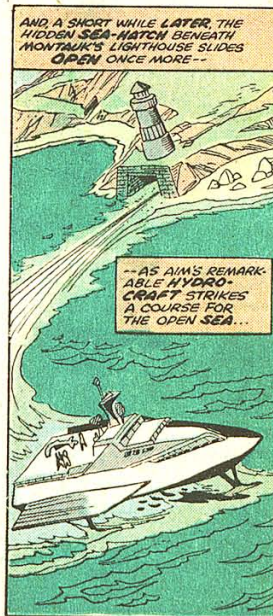
I'M BEING BEATEN TO DEATH... BY A RAINBOW!



I COULD NOT EMPLOY THIS TACTIC BACK AT THE RIDER HOUSE, SINCE THE PLACE WAS CRAWLING WITH POLICE

--BUT THIS TIME PUNK, THERE'S NOTHING THAT WILL SAVE YOU FROM MY WRATH!

WHUMP!



AND A SHORT WHILE LATER, THE HIDDEN SEA-NATCH BENEATH MONTAUK'S LIGHTHOUSE SLIDES OPEN ONCE MORE--

--AS AIM'S REMARKABLE HYDRO-CRAFT STRIKES A COURSE FOR THE OPEN SEA...



...CARRYING WITH IT TWO RATHER RELUCTANT PASSENGERS!

THERE'S STILL TIME TO CHANGE YOUR MIND, Y'KNOW.

SILENCE, DOLT!

THE ONE CALLED PHOTON HAS LEFT YOUR DISPOSITION IN OUR HANDS--



RELEASE THE ANCHOR MEN-- AND BID TWO YOUNG FOOLS GOOD-BYE!!

BETTER GRAB A DEEP BREATH, JET-HEAD! WE'RE GOING FOR A GOOD LONG...

GLUPEF!!



SWELL! UNLESS WE CAN BREAK THESE HEAVY CHAINS, WE'RE SUNK... LITERALLY!

I'VE HAD PLENTY OF PRACTICE HOLDING MY BREATH FOR EXTENDED PERIODS--

--BUT I'M AFRAID A NEWCOMER LIKE NOVA DOESN'T HAVE A PRAYER!



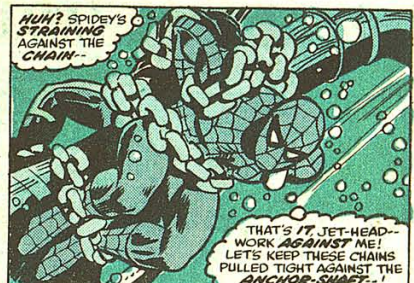
GOOD THING THIS ALIEN COSTUME CONTAINS ITS OWN RECYCLING AIR SUPPLY!

WHEN WE HIT THE WATER ITS PLEXIGLASS SHIELD SLID DOWN IN PLACE!



CAN'T WASTE TIME! --AND HAVE TO START THIS ALONE--

NOVA REALIZES WHAT I'M DOING!



HUH? SPIDEY'S STRAINING AGAINST THE CHAIN--

THAT'S IT, JET-HEAD-- WORK AGAINST ME! LET'S KEEP THESE CHAINS PULLED TIGHT AGAINST THE ANCHOR-SHAFT--!



THEN--IF OUR RIG CAGES DON'T GIVE OUT FIRST--WE MIGHT HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE!



THAT MAN'S SOME KIND OF HERO! HIS LUNGS MUST BE CLOSE TO BURSTING--

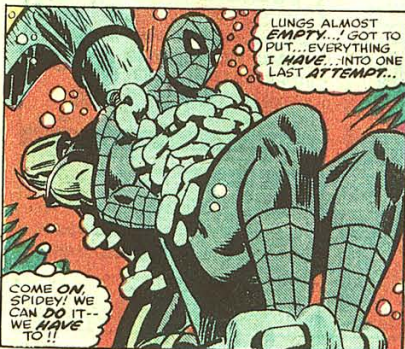
--BUT HE KEEPS TRYING!



CAN'T KEEP THIS UP... MUCH LONGER! EVERYTHING'S STARTING...TO GO BLACK...

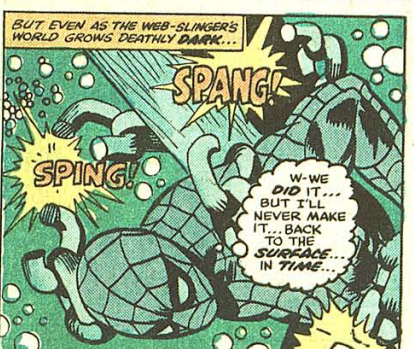


SPIDEY'S WEAKENING--I CAN FEEL IT! I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM BREAK FREE!



LUNGS ALMOST EMPTY--I GOT TO PUT...EVERYTHING I HAVE...INTO ONE LAST ATTEMPT...

COME ON, SPIDEY! WE CAN DO IT--WE HAVE TO!!



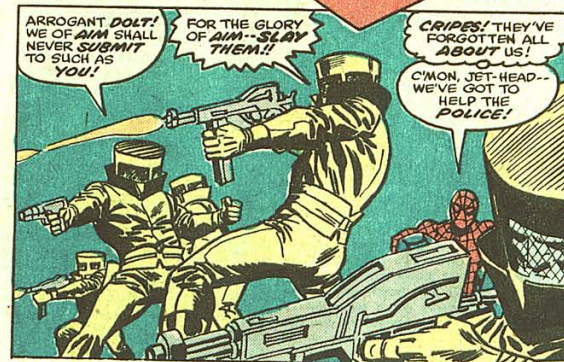
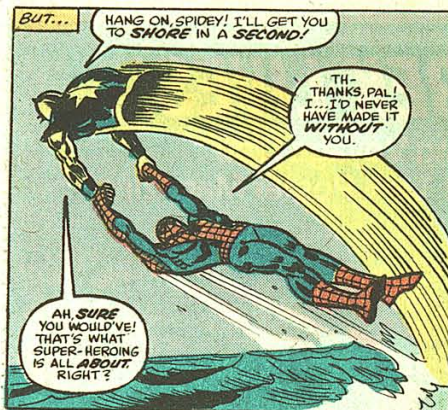
BUT EVEN AS THE WEB-SLINGERS WORLD GROWS DEATHLY DARK...

SPANG!

SPING!

W-WE DID IT... BUT I'LL NEVER MAKE IT... BACK TO THE SURFACE... IN TIME...

71



Stan Lee
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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Believers! Hey, I finally found a way to get myself off the hook with you! I'm always getting letters from frantic ones complaining that they missed a Marvel radio or TV interview because they didn't know it would be on the air until too late, and demanding that we let 'em know in advance. And, as I keep trying to explain, we usually can't let you know in advance because those air dates are made after our mags are already at the printers. But—here's one case where we're able to tip you off in plenty of time (so you can be sure to miss it!) I'm writing these imperishable words at the end of February '77, and they'll be printed in our mags that go on sale in May. Now, I just made a commitment to do a half-hour radio interview on what is probably the largest-audience radio program in the country, FOCUS ON YOUTH. It's supposed to be aired late in May or early June. Some of their previous guests have been Walter Mondale, Dick Cavett, Ayn Rand, and Ted Kennedy. I guess they invited me hoping that I'd put in a good word for them with Howard the Duck! Anyway, the FOCUS ON YOUTH producers gave me a list of stations for you which are scheduled to carry the interview; and now, before I forget, here 'tis:

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I suggest you call whichever station is in your area to find out the exact date and time. Boy, won't it be awful if a lot of people are listening in and I come across sounding like Irving Forbush? (Especially when everyone knows I really sound like J. Jonah Jameson!) And now, before I let you get back to the real world, remember a couple of months ago when I asked if anyone knew how to pronounce "Cauld mile faillie"? Here's the first answer we got, from our newest giant-size no-prize winner, Julianne Sasley of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and here's J.S.'s letter: "According to Irish Gaelic your phrase is pronounced 'cade me lay faulta'. Though Scotch Gaelic belongs to a slightly different family of the language, the pronunciation would be much the same." And in case you've all forgotten, our frenetic little phrase means "A hundred thousand welcomes"—which, until next ish, is what I wish to you!

Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! Spring is still several weeks in the future as your amiable armadillos set this in-type, but signs of Summer loom large in our vision. One of the surest signs—at least in the mixed-up Marvel manner of viewing things—is the appearance of our colossal King-size Annuals, and this month heralds the arrival of the first two of these! Kicking things off will be the IRON MAN ANNUAL, in which the armored Avenger joins forces with the Champions to try to avert the most devastating disaster to menace the West Coast since the Hulk lost a can of his favorite beans in the San Andreas fault. JIM SHOOTER plotted it, BILL MARLIN wrote it, GEORGE TUSKA and DON PERLIN pencilled and inked it to perfection... all you have to do is sit back, read it, and enjoy! And should you

crave more—in fact, we're kinda counting on it—Jolly JACK KIRBY has created, with the able inking assistance of JOHN VERPOORTEN and JOHN TARTAGLIONE, a king-size clash with that most malevolent of master villains, Magneto, for the CAPTAIN AMERICA ANNUAL. Just to make certain you get your money's worth, Jack's also tossing in an *entirely new* Brotherhood of Evil Mutants. It all adds up to deadly danger for Cap, but a guaranteed 34 pages of sheer thrills for you. Between our Annuals and other special projects—like our incredible KISS book, which goes on sale next month—we've got a summerful of way-out wonderment planned for you. Get in on it early so you don't miss any of the fun!

ITEM! For all of you who do your comics buying at a local 7-ELEVEN® store, there's another harbinger of Summer in the wings, namely a new set of Mighty Marvel Slurpee cups. Several seasons back, the Slurpee cups featured all the Marvel characters (including one of STAN THE MAN himself) and have gone on to become full-fledged collector's items, scrambled for, fought over, and sold at inflationary prices at comic conventions. This time around, instead of mere solitary poses, the cups feature panoramic wrap-around scenes of our characters in the kind of awesome action that's the Marvel trademark. As artfully assembled and creatively colored by the bullpen's own Peerless PATTY, we think this new set is going to be even more highly treasured than the first one. So, a word to the wise is sufficient. These Slurpee cups go on sale in the early summer. Watch for 'em... and glom on to them fast!

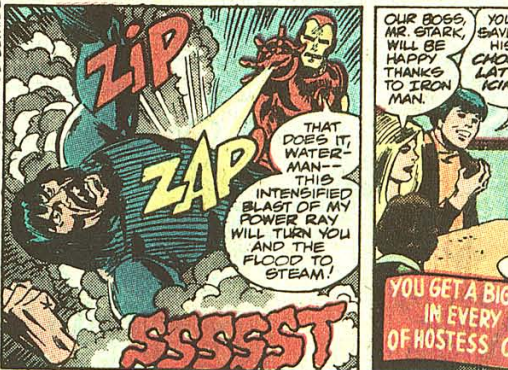


ITEM! A couple of Bullpen Bulletins back, we told you about the great GODZILLA book we had in the works. Well, this month it hits your newstand and if you're just half as happy with the results as we were when we saw what Devil-may-care DOUG MOENCH, Happy HERB TRIMPE, and Jaunty JIM MOONEY had done with Toho Productions' lively large lizard, then we've a definite hit in the making. ITEM! As long as we've got you checking things out, we'd also like to draw your attention to the latest issue of WHAT IF...? which explores the alternate reality that might be if "The Invaders Had Stayed Together after World War II." Also on sale this month is the second issue of our six-part adaptation of the George Lucas-Twentieth Century Fox film, STAR WARS. And coming up in late June is another special film adaptation, THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU. But more about it next time around. Till then, keep on thinking Marvel!

Shortly after the completion of last month's Bullpen Bulletin, we received the saddening news that artist BOB BROWN had died of leukemia. Bob is probably best known to Marvel readers for his penciling work on DAREDEVIL, as well as on AVENGERS and MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. During the last few years, Bob had also done much to promote better communication and exchange of ideas between American and European cartoonists. He was a gifted professional artist and a quiet, warm human being. He'll be sorely missed.

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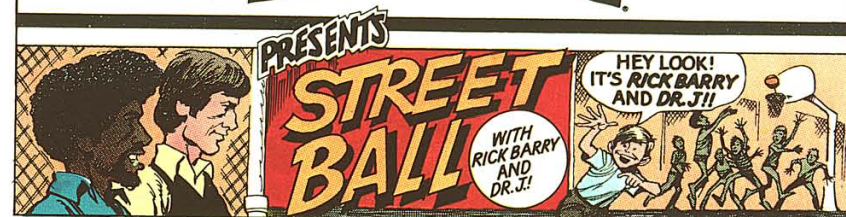
TWO SUPER-THINGS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE! FIRST, THE SKATE-BOARDING PSYCHO CALLED ROCKET RACER, AND THEN...

THE FIEND FROM THE FIRE!

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SPALDING



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